

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## 2SHB 2422

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**As Passed House:**  
February 13, 2006

**Title:** An act relating to providing funding for state and local parks.

**Brief Description:** Providing funding for state and local parks.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives B. Sullivan, Chase and Conway).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks: 1/13/06, 1/24/06 [DPS];  
Appropriations: 2/3/06, 2/4/06 [DP2S].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/13/06, 62-36.

**Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill**

- Creates the State Parks Centennial Account, managed by the State Investment Board, with interest from the account to be used for implementation of the State Parks' Centennial.
- Requires the transfer of at least \$500,000 per year from the Stadium and Exhibition Center Account to the Youth Athletic Facilities Account.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Upthegrove, Vice Chair; Buck, Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Dickerson, Eickmeyer, Hunt and Kagi.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Chandler and Orcutt.

**Staff:** Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Cody, Conway, Darneille, Dunshee, Grant, Haigh, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDermott, Miloscia, Schual-Berke and P. Sullivan.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Bailey, Buri, Chandler, Clements, Hinkle, Pearson, Priest, Talcott and Walsh.

**Staff:** Alicia Paatsch (786-7178).

**Background:**

The State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) manages a diverse system of 120 parks with many different types of facilities and historic buildings and a variety of recreation programs. The Commission has adopted a centennial plan to guide the parks system toward its 100th anniversary in 2013, and has identified capital facilities needs estimated at \$300 million and a backlog of major maintenance estimated at \$40 million over the next 10 years.

The Office for the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation manages the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) Grant Program for acquiring, developing, equipping, maintaining, and improving youth and community athletic facilities. Eligible entities that may apply for grants or loans include cities, counties, and qualified nonprofit organizations. The program was approved by Washington voters as part of Referendum 48, which provides funding for the Seattle Seahawks stadium. An initial \$10 million was contributed by the Seattle Seahawks in December 1998. Revenues to the YAF account from the Stadium and Exhibition Center Account are not expected in the next several years.

The Washington State Investment Board manages the investment of the funds of the state retirement systems, as well as other non-retirement funds.

**Summary of Second Substitute Bill:**

The State Parks Centennial Account (Centennial Account) is created to implement the Centennial Plan and for capital improvements to the state parks system. The State Investment Board may invest moneys in the Centennial Account, and only the interest may be appropriated to implement the Centennial Plan and for state parks capital projects. The Centennial Account retains its own interest earnings, and the principal of the account may not be spent.

On or before June 30 of each year, at least \$500,000 must be transferred to the YAF account. Metropolitan Park Dstricts are added as an entity eligible to receive grants from the YAF account.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested..

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect July 1, 2006.

**Testimony For:** (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) (In support) The day use fee has resulted in reduced attendance, high collection costs, and negative impacts to tourism. Citizens, particularly the poor and elderly, have been negatively impacted by the fees. Local parks are also being impacted with increased attendance. People already own their state parks and have a right to enjoy them without having to pay a parking fee.

(Neutral) Implementing the vehicle license fee will require programming changes and changes to the renewal form, resulting in new costs. Washington's experience with voluntary fees, organ donation awareness for example, has resulted in low participation rates.

(With concerns) No one likes the parking fee; however, if the fee is removed it needs to be replaced with a stable, long-term funding source. There needs to be some flexibility to allow the Commission to collect other types of parking fees. Parking fees have brought some improvements, vandalism is down, facilities have been improved, and staff have been hired to allow rangers to focus on their primary duties.

**Testimony For:** (Appropriations) This is a creative idea to address the problem of eroding funding for public parks. Parks has a hard time competing for general funds with kids, crooks and health care and we need to move parks funding from General Fund support.

**Testimony Against:** (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) None.

**Testimony Against:** (Appropriations) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) (In support) Representative Sullivan, prime sponsor; and Dennis Eagle, Washington Federation of State Employees.

(Neutral) Deb McCurley and Keith Long, Department of Licensing.

(With concerns) Joan Thomas, Fred Romero, and Pam Wilkins Ripp, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission; Jim King, Citizens for Parks and Recreation; Sandra Worthington, Washington State Parks Foundation; and Scott Hazelgrove, Washington State Auto Dealer's Association.

**Persons Testifying:** (Appropriations) (Other) Dennis Eagle, Washington Federation of State Employees.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) None.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** (Appropriations) None.